

CLAIMS:

We claim:

1. An e-business complex comprising:

a plurality of electronically accessible e-business complex management services configured to handle e-business processing in the e-business complex on behalf of electronically associated virtual store operators, vendors, business partners and professional services providers;

a virtual management office configured to coordinate e-business transactions between said associated virtual store operators, said on-line shoppers, said vendors, said business partners, and said professional services providers in the e-business complex; and,

a plurality of e-business complex management services requesters configured to remotely invoke selected ones of said electronically accessible e-business complex management services, each said e-business complex management services requester invoking said selected ones of said electronically accessible e-business complex management services on behalf of one of said associated virtual store operators, vendors, business partners and professional services providers.

2. The e-business complex of claim 1, wherein the e-business complex further comprises:

a complex entrance through which virtual stores in the e-business complex can be accessed by on-line shoppers;

5 a programmatic extension to at least one of said e-business complex
6 management services requesters, said extension providing a query interface to
7 products offered for sale by an associated store operator in a corresponding one of said
8 virtual stores; and,
9 a browsable catalog subsystem configured to provide access to said on-line
10 shoppers to browse products specified by said query interface.

1 3 The e-business complex of claim 1, wherein the e-business complex further
2 comprises:

3 a programmatic extension to at least one of said e-business complex
4 management services requesters, said extension providing a real-time order processing
5 service for processing orders in real time which are received from said management
6 office.

1 4. A method of cooperatively processing e-business transactions in an e-business
2 complex comprising the steps of:

3 registering a plurality of virtual store operators with the e-business complex, each
4 said registration establishing a virtual store in the e-business complex;
5 providing to individual ones of on-line shoppers in the e-business complex,
6 window displays of products offered for sale by virtual stores in the e-business complex,
7 and accepting shopper orders for said products from said individual on-line shoppers;

8 notifying selected store operators of said shopper orders, said selected store
9 operators operating virtual stores in the e-business complex which correspond to said
10 products ordered by said on-line shoppers;

11 notifying selected vendors of said shopper orders, said selected vendors
12 supplying said products offered for sale by said selected store operators;

13 fulfilling said shopper orders with said products supplied by said selected
14 vendors; and,

15 collecting payments for said shopper orders from said on-line shoppers and
16 distributing portions of said payments to each of said vendors and said store operators.

1 5. The method of claim 4, further comprising the steps of:

2 providing to said store operators a catalog of professional services offered for
3 sale by associated professional services providers; and,

4 brokering at least one transaction for at least one of said professional services
5 between at least one of said store operators and at least one of said professional
6 service providers.

1 6. The method of claim 4, wherein said fulfilling step comprises the step of:

2 notifying said selected vendors of said shopper orders wherein each said
3 shopper order specifies products supplied by said selected vendors;

4 producing shipping and handling labels for each of said specified products; and,

5 forwarding said shipping and handling labels to said selected vendors only when
6 said selected vendors are ready to ship all of said specified products.

7 7. The method of claim 4, further comprising the steps of:
8 brokering tax and accounting services between a tax and accounting business
9 partner and individual ones of said store operators; and,
10 forwarding tax and accounting statements produced by said business partner to
11 said individual ones of said store operators.

1 8. A machine readable storage having stored thereon a computer program for
2 cooperatively processing e-business transactions in an e-business complex, said
3 computer program comprising a routine set of instructions for causing the machine to
4 perform the steps of:
5 registering a plurality of virtual store operators with the e-business complex, each
6 said registration establishing a virtual store in the e-business complex;
7 providing to individual ones of on-line shoppers in the e-business complex,
8 window displays of products offered for sale by virtual stores in the e-business complex,
9 and accepting shopper orders for said products from said individual on-line shoppers;
10 notifying selected store operators of said shopper orders, said selected store
11 operators operating virtual stores in the e-business complex which correspond to said
12 products ordered by said on-line shoppers;
13 notifying selected vendors of said shopper orders, said selected vendors
14 supplying said products offered for sale by said selected store operators;
15 fulfilling said shopper orders with said products supplied by said selected
16 vendors; and,

17 collecting payments for said shopper orders from said on-line shoppers and
18 distributing portions of said payments to each of said vendors and said store operators.

1 9. The machine readable storage of claim 8, further comprising the steps of:
2 providing to said store operators a catalog of professional services offered for
3 sale by associated professional services providers; and,
4 brokering at least one transaction for at least one of said professional services
5 between at least one of said store operators and at least one of said professional
6 service providers.

7 10. The machine readable storage of claim 8, wherein said fulfilling step comprises
8 the step of:
9 notifying said selected vendors of said shopper orders wherein each said
10 shopper order specifies products supplied by said selected vendors;
11 producing shipping and handling labels for each of said specified products; and,
12 forwarding said shipping and handling labels to said selected vendors only when
13 said selected vendors are ready to ship all of said specified products.

1 11. The machine readable storage of claim 8, further comprising the steps of:
2 brokering tax and accounting services between a tax and accounting business
3 partner and individual ones of said store operators; and,
4 forwarding tax and accounting statements produced by said business partner to
5 said individual ones of said store operators.